

# THE NUGGET



Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

## The Newsletter of the Mother Lode DX/Contest Club

September 2021

Volume 26 Number 9

### **From the President – NC6R**

Attention MLDXCC – CQP (Cal QSO) is almost here!

Here is a snapshot of “bonus points” benefitting your score as a MLDXCC member -

#### **Bonus Points**

- 10,000 points for every log submitted with a unique callsign.
- 50,000 points for every California County Expedition. Can be any CA County. **Maximum of 50,000 bonus points per county.**
- 50,000 points for every California Mobile. 3 county minimum.
- 50,000 points for at least one YL S/O log submitted.
- 50,000 points for at least one Youth S/O log submitted.
- 50,000 points for at least one New Contester S/O log submitted.
- Note 1: See [CQP Rules](#) for definitions of a CQP Expedition, Mobile, YL, Youth and New Contester.
- Note 2: Minimum 10 QSOs for all club bonuses above.

MLDXCC has a great chance of pulling off a big upset win if we take advantage of all the bonus points!

Several DXpeditions are currently active as are some “not often heard” countries. Conditions

into Europe and Asia seem to be improving with good openings on 17 & 15 meters. If you’ve got a rotatable HF antenna, try turning it off towards the South Pacific and you just might pick up some Africa stations coming in long path.

The Lincoln swap meet was quite a treat! It was great to see so many of you in attendance. If we could’ve had gotten everyone together in one place at one time it would have been a good size meeting!

For those who are contesters, take a look at the WA7BNM contest calendar. There’s a number of State QSO parties, the Makrothen RTTY contest and CQ WW DX Phone all coming up in October after CQP. Also the ARRL Sweepstakes contest (CW & SSB) is just around the corner in November.

AS A REMINDER – Nominations for 2022 club officers will be open at the October meeting. W1RH (VP) and NC6R (Pres) are termed out and K1GYT (Emilia) as secretary has elected not to re-run. K6SZQ (Sue) has indicated she is willing to stay on another year as treasurer. This is your

club and your opportunity to be of positive influence. Please be in thought as to who you'd like to see fill these slots, just make sure you contact them and get their approval beforehand. Elections will be held during the November meeting.

As always, here are websites to view upcoming contest and DX announcements -

Contest calendar dates are listed at - <https://www.contestcalendar.com/index.html>

### **From the V.P. - W1RH**

It's been a long last few weeks, with little focus on contesting or DX'ing. The reason has been the Caldor Fire. Although it did not come anywhere near my house, it did result in the evacuations of a good percentage of El Dorado County. Our GMRS Neighborhood Radio Watch fire alert groups (five repeaters operated by the El Dorado County Amateur Radio Club) were doing their job well. Two of our groups, the Pollock Pines-Camino Neighborhood Radio Watch, and the Cosumnes River Neighborhood Radio Watch, were directly affected by the fire with many homes lost.

Karen and I gave Dick, K6LRN, and Carolyn, K6TKD, a place to stay for 16 days. Yesterday, Steve, W1SRD, and I met Bob, K6XX, at Dick and Carolyn's place and got a first look at just what a great job Cal Fire did to save their home. It was pretty impressive to see that a dozer cleared an area, completely surrounding their house. So what if he plowed over a few sections of Rohn 45 that were lying on the ground.

Bob, K6XX, who lost his house in a fire two years ago, in Santa Cruz County, was the recipient of a

DX operation announcements can be found at - <https://www.ng3k.com/misc/adxo.html>

73 & good DX,

Steve / NC6R

MLDXCC President

TH7DXX tri-band beam that Dick gave him. Bob expects to have the antenna up at his place prior to CQP.

I firmly believe, and it took me many years to realize this, that Amateur Radio operators do have an obligation to support communications in emergencies. Our licenses are nearly free, as is our spectrum, and we certainly want to keep it that way. Supporting an emergency communications effort, or even communications for public events such as a race, bike ride, etc., is just the right thing to do.

A few of our MLDXCC members were very active during the fire and animal rescue period. This included Steve (W1SRD), Doris (K0BEE), Tony (W6QA), Jay (KE6GLA) and Nancy (KG6PNP). I was also at the staging area nearly every day, primarily interfacing with the folks in charge and scheduling the operators.

Due to the fire and the WW Digi contest (I had little time to operate), I missed our CQP planning meeting, so I am really not sure what our club's strategy is this year. With a whole new batch of club competition rules, hopefully

we are prepared. I'll be operating with W1SRD, AA1ON, K0BEE, K6TLR, and N6DE in Tehama County where we hope to break the all-time M/S Expedition. I may also operate mobile, for a three county drive, it operator scheduling permits.





Bob W1RH

**Next Meeting**

**Date:** October – 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Time:** TBD

**Location:** TBD

**Presentation:** TBD



## **MLDXCC Treasurer - K6SZQ**

MLDXCC Treasurer's Report - August 2021

7/31/2021	Opening Balance	\$2,568.06
	Income	\$70.00
	2021 Dues	\$70.00
	Expenses	\$0.00
	none	
8/31/2021	Ending Balance	\$2,638.06

## **From the Secretary - KI6YYT**

No meeting notes because an official meeting didn't occur on September 18<sup>th</sup>.

Emilia Seiferling KI6YYT

## **CLUB Dues**

**2021 dues are due!**

The Dues period runs from Jan 1 to Dec 31. Dues are \$20.00 individual, \$30.00 family

PayPal – Send to: [motherlodeclub@gmail.com](mailto:motherlodeclub@gmail.com). Use the Friends and Family option.

Cash or Check - Given to a club officer at a meeting. Or mail to the Treasurer - Sue Allred K6SZQ, 17610 Red Mule Rd. Fiddletown, CA 95629

## **Club Log Standings**

### **Overall**

1	N6JV	Norm Wilson	198
2	NK7I	Rick Bates	184
3	NJ6G	Dennis Moore	181

### **CW**

1	K6YK	John Lee	127
2	N6JV	Norm Wilson	117
3	WE6Z	Doug Phillips	91

### **Phone**

1	NC6R	Steve Allred	119
2	K6YK	John Lee	78
3	K6TQ	Dave Sanders	73

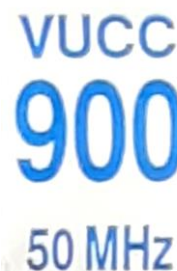
### **Data**

1	NK7I	Rick Bates	177
2	NJ6G	Dennis Moore	175
3	N6JV	Norm Wilson	167

*Club Log Standings are based on worked entities during the calendar year.*

## **Member Reports**

ATNO: D60AD Comoros on 40 meter FT8  
Doug WE6Z



Finally got my VUCC endorsement. N6JV

## WW Digi Debrief

Jim, K6OK

In last month's Nugget and NCCC Jug ("Take the WW Digi Challenge," Aug. 2021) I encouraged members of both clubs to fire up their computers to whistle into their radios to play in the 3rd annual running of the WW DIGI DX contest. At the same time, I threw down the gauntlet and challenged all of you to dethrone me as the holder of the all-time high score in W6 land across all categories, a mark that I set last year with a paltry 242,268 points.

Merely one week after the contest we've got plenty of information to chew on for this report. Thanks to the rapid number crunchers behind the scenes at the WW DIGI website, we already have raw scores, in addition to anecdotal reports from 3830, reflector posts and private e-mails. So let's get started...

**Continuously Cursed Contest.** As we all know, FT contesting gets its share of flak, but why does mean old Sol have to pile on too? The solar Ap-index numbers tell the story: 2019, 40. 2020, 25. 2021, 17. We NorCal hams know that when the A-index gets into double digits the California-EU door slams shut and we all say "thank God for South America." That's three years in a row that WW DIGI has suffered worse-than-average condx. FT modes are good, but not *that* good -- they can't punch through an aurora that's lit up brighter than a cheap motel neon sign.

**ET Phones Home.** NCCC's resident alien, Mark **K6UFO**, traded in his bicycle for a Millennium

Falcon, assembled a crack digi team in Multi-Two category, and demolished my high water mark with a raw score of 483,824 points, composed of 1,089 QSOs and 174 grids. Unless there's a sleeper M/2 out there not on 3830, the K6UFO team will, by a large margin, hold the highest score ever in W6 across all categories. But that's small potatoes: they will likely hold the highest ever M/2 score for North America. The team worked the Mt Umunhum K6MTU station remotely in shifts. Team members were Mark **K6UFO**, Tom **ND2T**, Kevin **K6TD**, Ed **W0YK**, and Dave **WD6T**. Excellent job guys!

**Could Team K6UFO Take the World Record in M/2 Next Year?** Yes, a bit of a reach, but doable. Their 483k score beat the existing world record set last year by **S51A** at 461k points. But **S51A** raised the ante this year with a reported 522k points!

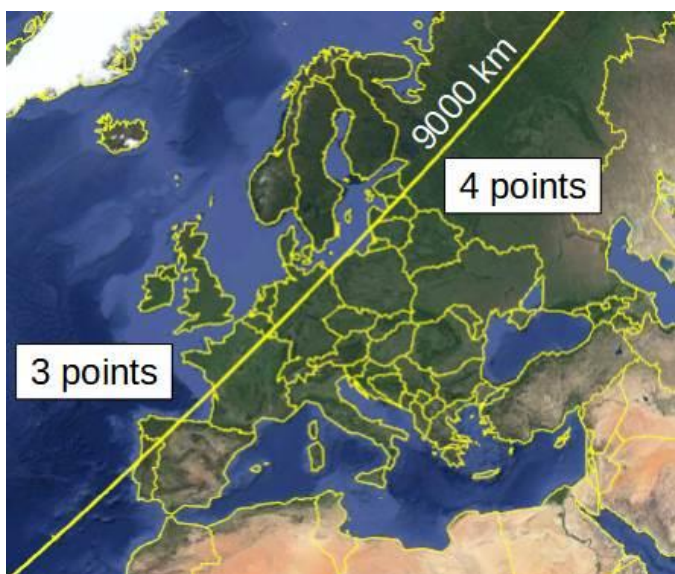
So how can K6UFO do it? Here's a fascinating wrinkle in WW Digi scoring: *you can beat another station even though you have fewer QSOs and fewer mults than them.* I can hear the pileup of my dear readers all saying "Again, again?" No problem, cool your amps, I'll explain.

Call	Score	QSO	Grids	Pts/Q
S51A	522,210	1382	206	1.83
K6UFO	483,824	1089	174	2.57

source: 3830, ww-digi.com

In this contest the quality of each QSO matters, not just the mults. Watch this: if K6UFO next year makes 1100 Q's, 176 grids -- slightly better than what they had this year -- and they raise their points per Q to 2.70, they will score 523,000 pts. How do you raise your points per QSO? By working more 4-, 5- and 6-pointers

(remember, in WW DIGI each Q gets 1 pt plus extra pts for each 3,000 km). It's obvious S51A is feasting on tons of QSOs from local EU's and east coast NA stations, which are in the 1- to 3-point range. That's S51A's weakness. While your opponent is doing busy work with little onesies and twosies, the smart DIGI operator fishes for the DX. This map shows where MLDXCC's 4-point boundary lies:



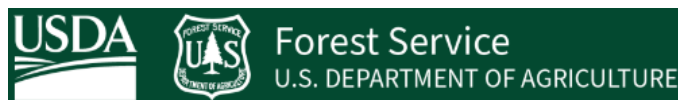
Imagine that, a contest with a west coast advantage. All we need now is some cooperation from the Sun so we can use it to its fullest.

**Other Notable Efforts.** RTTY wizard Jeff **WK6I** took the brave leap into FT modes with a full BIC effort from the W7RN superstation with 905 Q's and 374k points... Giuseppe **KE8FT** improved on his existing W6 record in SOSB20 with 276 Q's and 32k points... Doug **WE6Z** worked Asia for 2.5 hours, 74 Q's and 26 grids(!) for 5,772 points and will likely hold the W6 record for SOSB40. To get the latest on raw scores, records and more visit [ww-digi.com](http://ww-digi.com).

**Misc QRN.** A number of operators opined that

the two annoyances that continue to dog FT mode contesting are uncompleted QSO's and non-contesters who want signal reports... I wish more FT contesters would warm up to FT4, which would raise rates... I had 70% FT8 and 30% FT4, causing my overall rate to be a leisurely 26 Q's per hour... We'll end on this positive note from Jim **WX6V**: "A fun contest this year. Much improved interaction between N1MM+ and WSJT-X software. Really enjoy these digital mode contests!"

Hope to C U in 2022 WW DIGI... RR73, Jim K6OK



### USDA Forest Service Temporarily Closing All California National Forests for Public Safety

VALLEJO, Calif., — August 30, 2021. To better provide public and firefighter safety due to the ongoing California wildfire crisis, USDA Forest Service Pacific Southwest Region is announcing a temporary closure of all National Forests in California. This closure will be in effect from Aug. 31, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. through September 17, 2021 at 11:59 p.m. This order does not affect the Humboldt-Toiyabe National Forest, which is not in the Pacific Southwest Region.

More than 6,800 wildfires have burned 1.7 million acres across all jurisdictions in California, and the National Wildfire Preparedness Level (PL) has been at PL5 since July 14, 2021, only the third time in the past 20 years that the nation has reached PL 5 by mid-July – indicating the highest level of wildland fire activity.

[https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd949147.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd949147.pdf)



Pursuant to 16 U.S.C. § 551 and 36 C.F.R. § 261.50(a) and (b), and to provide for public safety, the following acts are prohibited on National Forest System lands within the Eldorado National Forest (as shown on Exhibit A). This Order is effective from August 17 2021, through September 30, 2021.

1. Going into or being upon National Forest System lands. 36 C.F.R. § 261.52(e).
2. Being on a National Forest System road. 36 C.F.R. § 261.54(e).
3. Being on a National Forest System trail. 36 C.F.R. § 261.55(a).

[https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE\\_DOCUMENTS/fseprd945011.pdf](https://www.fs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/fseprd945011.pdf)

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### Lincoln Ham Swap

The Ham radio swap meet in Lincoln on September 18<sup>th</sup> turned out great! It was one of the biggest swap meets in a long time. It was great to see a bunch of club members there. My brother was able to stop by and man my “Collins” tables, while I made a few passes around.









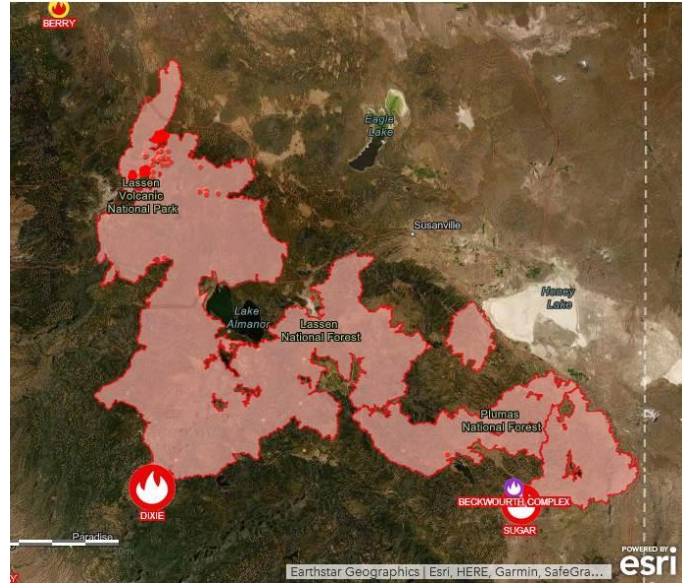


Doug WE6Z

## Dixie fire

### Fire at a glance (numbers)

- Incident Name: **Dixie**
- State: **CA**
- Lead Agency: **BTU**
- Size (acres): **960,581**
- Percent Contained: **86%**
- Estimate of Containment: **September 30, 2021**
- Personnel: **2,270**
- Structures Destroyed: **1,329**



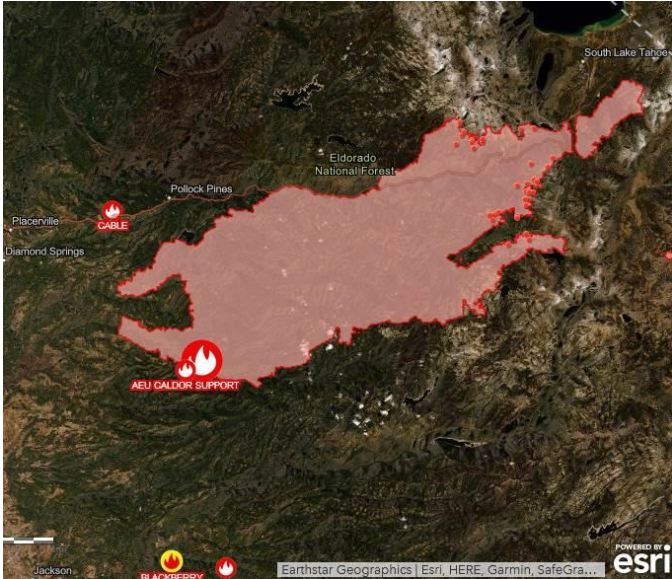
The Dixie fire sits at 960,581 acres. It is the second largest wildfire in California history. It has been burning for 9 weeks. The fire has burned in Butte, Tehama, Plumas, Lassen, and Shasta counties and is 86% contained.

<https://yubanet.com/regional-fires/dixie/>

## Caldor fire

### Fire at a glance (numbers)

- Incident Name: **Caldor, Eldorado NF**
- State: **CA**
- Lead Agency: **ENF**
- Size (acres): **219,267**
- Percent Contained: **71%**
- Estimate of Containment: **September 27, 2021**
- Personnel: **2,948**
- Structures Destroyed: **1,003**

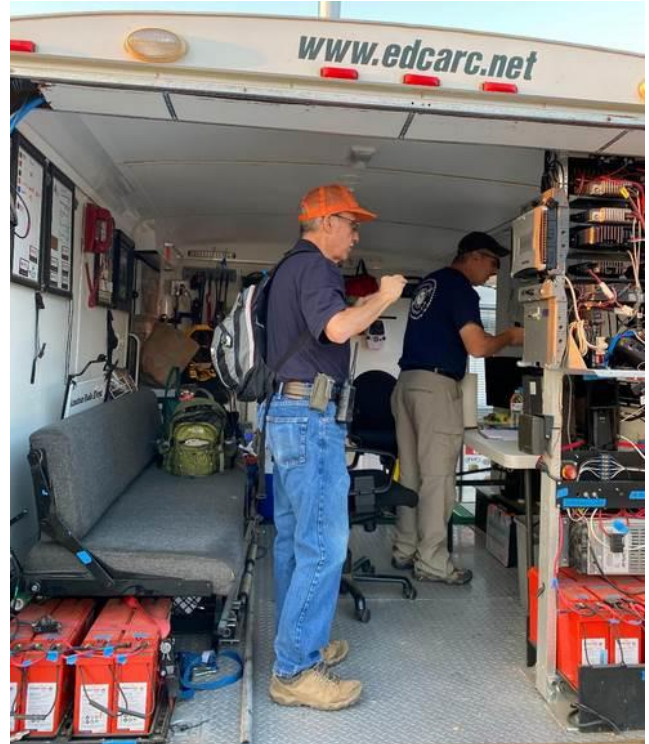


The Caldor fire sits at 219,267 acres and has been burning since August 15<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This fire hits us especially hard because it has burned a great swath of El Dorado County. As of now, it is 71% contained.

<https://yubanet.com/regional-fires/caldor/>

## EL Dorado County ARC

The El Dorado County Amateur Radio Club has been providing communication support for large and small animal rescue efforts for the Caldor fire. Over 1800 animals across three counties have been rescued and taken care of. Big thanks to Bob W1RH, Jay KE6GLA, and all the other volunteers!





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### HT Net

Ernie W6KAP is hosting an HT net on Friday evenings on the W6KAP repeater. 440.450 (+5.000 MHz) PL 127.3.

The net takes checkins from users on HTs and discusses emergency preparedness, how to use an HT, programming HTs, and why you need an HT.

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### Doug's GoBox project

I decided to add solar to my GoBox project. I picked up a 100 watt solar panel, watt meter, BioEnno solar charge controller, and a 16 AH LiFePO4 battery. Initial tests are promising.



Doug WE6Z

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### ARRL Contesting Certificates

If you have participated in ARRL Contests by submitting your log, enter your call sign and see your available certificates. You can view and

download them. The certificates show where you placed in the contest.

<http://contests.arrrl.org/certificates.php>

## **Awards Checkers ARRL**

Ken Anderson, K6TA

(DXCC, WAS, VUCC, 160M)

Rick Samoian, W6SR

## **Tube of the Month**

### **5876**

After college, I had some periods of unemployment that I used to study for the commercial radiotelephone licenses. I thought that radio and television broadcasting might be a possible career. When nothing was available, I took a job as a communications technician servicing 2-way radio systems. One of my duties was to go onto mountain tops and service repeaters. Once when one of these repeaters failed, I was introduced to an RCA microwave unit. It was being used as a remote base for a 170 MHz system. I had never seen so many tubes in one six-foot rack. The transmitter had an output of 1 watt or so at 990 MHz. I couldn't find the final amplifier at first. It was a "pencil triode" made for grounded grid service. The body is the diameter of a pencil and is about 2.25 inches long. RCA first marketed the [5876](#) in 1950 and it was used in transmitters and in test equipment. It has a mu of

56 and could be used up to 3 GHz. Its massive power supply had an output of 300 volts at 25 ma.



Another time when that system failed, a trip with a spare 5876 was made to the mountain. The tube was good but the SWR was high. This system used a pair of 3-foot aluminum parabolic dishes. After a close inspection of the transmit antenna, I took a pair of pliers and like a tooth extraction, removed the 30-caliber bullet from the dipole feed. The feed was bent a bit but still worked while a new feed was ordered.

Visit the museum at [N6JV.com](http://N6JV.com)  
Norm N6JV

## **MLDXCC Focus Contests**

The following lists all contests in which MLDXCC would appreciate your efforts.

ARRL SS CW/PH  
ARRL DX Phone\*  
ARRL DX CW\*  
ARRL 10M\*  
ARRL 160M\*  
California QSO Party

\*Proposed and approved at the November 12, 2016 MLDXCC general meeting.

Northern California Contest Club (NCCC) announced their focus contests at their August 2018 meeting. This list can be found in the Aug 2018 NCCC newsletter.

ARRL RTTY RU  
CQ WPX RTTY  
CQ WPX SSB  
CQ WPX CW

## **The NOAA Solar Update**

Click the link below to display the latest NOAA solar predictions.

<http://www.swpc.noaa.gov/products/weekly-highlights-and-27-day-forecast>

## **UPCOMING DX and DXpeditions**

Click the link below to display upcoming DXpeditions.

<http://www.ng3k.com/Misc/adxo.html>

## **MLDXCC Reflector**

The MLDXCC reflector is maintained at groups.io. Visit <https://groups.io/g/mldxcc>

We also maintain a spotting reflector at <https://groups.io/g/MLDXCC-Spots>

We are also on Facebook!  
<https://www.facebook.com>

## **UPCOMING Events**

For the latest contest info, click on the following link:

<http://www.contestcalendar.com/contestcalendar.html>

## **Classifieds**

*Members are requested to review their classified ads each month for accuracy and to resubmit their ads or confirm their desire to keep it running in the next issue.*

## **The Northern California Swap**

Thursday evenings at 8 PM local on the N6ICW

repeater system 147.195 +123  
Join Armand WB2ZEI and the group to buy, sell,  
or trade amateur radio related gear. Check-ins  
and visitors welcome.

**New! "The Serial Box"** (SBOX) by N6TV –  
Combination Serial Port Splitter, ACOM /  
Elecraft / SPE Amplifier Interface, FSK/CW/PTT  
keying interface, and Breakout Box

<https://www.eham.net/reviews/detail/13971>

Serial Box



Serial Box

**"The Y-BOX"** by N6TV – 4-way Elecraft K3/K3S  
ACC port splitter, Elecraft Amplifier Interface,  
and Breakout Box

<https://www.eham.net/reviews/detail/13296>



Y-Box

N6TV

Need QSL cards, business cards, club banners?  
Contact Vina K6VNA [vina@sign-tek.com](mailto:vina@sign-tek.com)

## Swapmeet

Valley of the Moon

Valley of the Moon Amateur Radio Club

Presents

# HAMFEST 2021

Saturday, October 2nd,  
8:00 AM to 12:00 Noon

Featuring:

- Swap Meet (indoor and outdoor spaces)
- Breakfast (pancakes, sausage and eggs)
- VE Testing Session (advance registration required)
- Station Demos
- Fox Hunt
- And more!



First Congregational Church of Sonoma  
252 W Spain St, Sonoma  
Talk in on 145.350 MHz (88.5 PL)  
For info: [valleyofthemoonarc@gmail.com](mailto:valleyofthemoonarc@gmail.com)

Admission: FREE  
Breakfast: \$8.00

<http://www.vomarc.org>

<https://www.vomarc.org/events/HamFest2021.pdf>

Pacificon





# PACIFICON<sup>SM</sup> 2021

San Ramon Marriott  
2600 Bishop Drive  
San Ramon CA 94583

## IN PERSON!

Friday through Sunday  
Oct. 15-17, 2021

<https://sites.google.com/mdarc.org/pacificon2021-new>

### **2021 Meeting Dates**

January – 23<sup>rd</sup> Zoom  
Feb – none  
March – 20<sup>th</sup>  
Apr – 17<sup>th</sup>  
May – 15<sup>th</sup>  
June – 19<sup>th</sup>  
July – 24<sup>th</sup>  
August – 28<sup>th</sup>  
September – 18<sup>th</sup>  
October – 23<sup>rd</sup>  
November – 13<sup>th</sup>  
Dec – none

*Dates are arranged to accommodate major contest dates.  
Meeting dates are subject to change. MLDXCC  
traditionally holds a mid-year combined meeting with  
NCCC.*

### **Area Clubs**

Northern California Contest Club -  
<https://www.nccc.cc>

Lodi Amateur Radio Club -  
<http://www.lodiarc.org>

Stockton Delta Amateur Radio Club -  
<http://www.w6sf.org>

Pizza Lovers 259 -  
<https://www.pl259.org>

El Dorado Amateur Radio Club -  
<http://edcarc.net>

Sierra Foothills Amateur Radio Club -  
<http://www.w6ek.org>

Redwood Empire DX Association -  
<http://www.redxa.com>

Calaveras Amateur Radio Society  
<http://calaverasars.org/>

Tuolumne County Amateur Radio Electronics  
Society (TCARES)  
<https://tcares.net/>

*Please contact the editor to have your club listed here.*

### **ARRL Pacific Division**

Pacific Division Director  
Kristen A. McIntyre K6WX  
[k6wx@arrl.org](mailto:k6wx@arrl.org)

Pacific Division Vice Director  
Vacant

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Sacramento Valley Section Manager

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San Joaquin Valley Section Manager

John Litz NZ6Q

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## **Officers of the MLDXCC**

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